



## U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE TRANSMITTAL SHEET

PART	SUBJECT	RELEASE NUMBER
150 FW 1-3	Volunteer Services Program Policy, Procedures, and Responsibilities for Volunteers Volunteer Eligibility Agreements Volunteer Program Operations	435
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT Division of Visitor Services and Communications		DATE December 15, 2003

### EXPLANATION OF MATERIAL TRANSMITTED:

These chapters contain policies, procedures, and responsibilities for administration of the Volunteer Program.

150 FW 3 supersedes Director's Order 121 and Exhibits 1, 2, and 3, March 20, 2000.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR

### FILING INSTRUCTIONS:

#### Remove:

150 FW 1, 04/06/92, FWM 020  
150 FW 2, 04/06/92, FWM 020  
150 FW 3, 04/06/92, FWM 020

#### Insert:

150 FW 1, 12/15/03, FWM 435  
150 FW 2, 12/15/03, FWM 435  
150 FW 3, 12/15/03, FWM 435

**FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE  
VOLUNTEERS**

**Volunteers**

**Part 150 Volunteer Services Program**

**Chapter 2 Volunteer Eligibility and Agreements**

**150 FW 2**

**2.1 What is the purpose of this chapter?** This chapter contains information on volunteer eligibility requirements and agreements.

**2.2 What is the scope of this chapter?** This chapter applies to personnel working with individuals, groups, and students who dedicate time and talent to assist the agency.

**2.3 Who is eligible to volunteer?** We accept volunteers without regard to race, creed, color, sex, age, national origin, political affiliation, religion, disability, or any other nonmerit factor. We do not limit acceptance to United States citizens. Noncitizens must provide documentation as to their residence status as required by Federal or State law and possess the appropriate visa from their country of origin.

**2.4 Are there age limitations?** No minimum age or maximum age limits exist for volunteers. Unit managers, however, must comply with appropriate Federal and State laws and standards when using the services of minors. Unit managers may set minimum age limits in the interest of safety and/or Service image. Contact your servicing human resources office, Regional/CNO safety manager, and local State employment service office with questions about the application of labor laws. We must obtain written permission of a parent/guardian for all volunteers under age 18. See paragraph 2.8C for information about Parental Approval Forms (FWS Form 3-2087).

**2.5 What qualifications do we require?** Volunteers must meet required training certification before we assign them to potentially hazardous work (see 150 FW 1). Volunteers must be physically able to carry out work assigned to them. We will ask volunteers about any physical limitations that may affect their assigned work. We must include documentation of these limitations in the Volunteer Services Agreement.

**2.6 When does a volunteer have Federal status?** We do not consider Service volunteers to be Federal employees for any purpose other than coverage by:

**A.** Federal tort claims provisions published in 28 U.S.C. 2671 through 2680. Refer claims arising as a result of volunteer participation to the Regional/CNO Tort Claims Officer (see 401 FW 1-3).

**B.** Federal Employees Compensation Act (5 U.S.C. 81), dealing with compensation for injuries sustained during the performance of work assignments. Guidelines on processing injury compensation claims are available from the servicing human resources office. Supervisors must submit a Report of Accident/Incident (DI 134) for all work-related injuries in accordance with 240 FW 7.

**C.** Volunteers are considered to be employees while on official travel status for the Service. Project leaders will approve/decide if individual volunteers will travel on official duty.

**2.7 What governs volunteer conduct?** Department of the Interior regulations ([43 CFR 20](#)) govern volunteer conduct. Field stations may develop their own sets of volunteer conduct guidelines pertinent to individual station and volunteer activities at those stations.

**2.8 What forms are applicable to the volunteer services program?**

**A. Volunteer Application Form (Optional Form 301).** The Volunteer Application for Natural Resources Agencies records information on a potential volunteer's background and areas of interest. We can use this form to screen applicants for interviews and to develop a list of potential volunteers for future needs. Attach resumes to the completed application form or use them instead of the application form.

**B. Volunteer Services Agreement (FWS Form 3-2148).** The individual volunteer and a representative of the Service sign this agreement. A group leader may complete a single agreement for a volunteer group. We must have a signed agreement before initiating projects, even for projects of only a few hours duration. We can modify the agreement at any time by mutual consent, and the agreement must at all times accurately reflect the volunteer's duties. This is important in case of questions concerning injuries or liabilities. We must give a copy of the agreement, with any revisions or amendments, to the volunteer. We must keep a copy of the Volunteer Services Agreement on file at the station.

**C. Parental Approval Form (FWS Form 3-2087).** All volunteers under the age of 18 must obtain written permission to perform volunteer activities from a parent or legal guardian. Keep signed parental approval forms on file with Volunteer Services Agreements. Service staff should check with the State employment agency to determine if volunteers under 18 also need a work permit from the State. It may be necessary to obtain additional parental approval for special situations, such as participation in Lyme disease blood testing programs. The unit supervisor should coordinate this aspect of the program with the Regional Safety Manager.

**2.10 How long do I maintain volunteer records?** Maintain copies of volunteer records on file in the field station or office for 3 years after termination of the volunteer's service.